

Message Text

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ACTION EA-13

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ADP-00 SSO-00 NSC-10 NSCE-00 EUR-10 PM-03

DODE-00 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 L-02 PRS-01

IO-03 DPW-01 RSR-01 /070 W
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O P 091045 Z JUN 73

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2934

INFO USDEL JEC PARIS IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 10321

LIMDIS

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT MILI VS VN

SUBJECT: IMPASSE ON HANOI LIAISON FLIGHT CONTINUES

1. SUMMARY: USAF C-130 ON RETURN FPJMT LIAISON FLIGHT FROM HANOI JUNE 8 EXPERIENCED EXPLOSION ON BOARD. ON ARRIVAL TAN SON NHUT, GVN SECURITY OFFICIALS INSISTED ON SEARCHING ALL LUGGAGE AND CARGO; DRV/ PRG PASSENGERS ADAMANTLY REFUSED. PROBLEM DISCUSSED BY EMBOFFS WITH GVN CEASEFIRE PLANNERS, WHO INDICATED DECISION TO RELEASE CARGO WITHOUT INSPECTION WOULD REQUIRE APPROVAL BY HIGH AUTHORITY. AS OF 1610 LOCAL JUNE 9, GVN DEL RECEIVED INSTRUCTIONS TO ACCEPT COMPROMISE SOLUTION WORKED OUT WITHIN FPJMT WHICH WOULD RELEASE DRV/ PRG BAGGAGE FOLLWING INSPECTION OF EXPLOSIVE DEVICE BY US EOD SPECIALISTS. END SUMMARY

2. USAF C-130 ON REGULARLY SCHEDULED FPJMT LIAISON FLIGHT RETURNING FROM HANOI TO SAIGON AFTERNOON JUNE 8 HAD MINOR EXPLOSION AND BRIEF FLASH FLAME ABOARD, CAUSED BY UNIDENTIFIED PYROTECHNIC OR INCENDIARY DVICE CONTAINED IN LUGGAGE OF DRV PASSENGER. NO SERIOUS INJURIES OR DAMAGE RESULTED; AIRCRAFT CONTINUED TO TAN SON NHUT AIRPORT, SAIGON.

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3. ON ARRIVAL GVN SECURITY OFFICIAL INSISTED ON RIGHT TO INSPECT ALL CARGO ABORAD, INCLUDING PERSONAL LUGGAGE; DRV AND PRG PASSENGERS DEMURRED AND REFUSED TO LEAVE AIRCRAFT. EMBASSY PRESS OFFICER AND POLITICAL OFFICER PROCEEDED TO AIRPORT TO ASSIST USDEL. UNPRODUCTIVE DISCUSSIONS CONTINUED MOST OF THE NIGHT BETWEEN USDEL, GVNDEL AND COMMUNISTS. SHORTLY BEFORE DAWN ALL PARTIES ACCEPTED REFERRAL OF ISSUE TO SPECIAL FPJMT PLENARY JUNE 9.

4. FOLLOWING DISCUSSIONS WITH CHUSDEL, EMBOFFS TOOK PROBLEM TO SENIOR GVN CEASEFIRE PLANNER, LTGEN HON, IN PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE, WHO WAS JOINTED BY BGEN HIEP, DEPUTY CHIEF GVN TPJMC DEL AND POLICE COLONEL PHUNG CHARGED WITH TAN SON NHUT SECURITY. AFTER LENGTHY DISCUSSION GENERAL HON AGREED TO SEEK APPROVAL FOR GVN COMPROMISE ON QUESTION OF SEARCH OF COMMUNIST DELEGATION LUGGAGE AND CARGO, BUT INDICATED DECISION RESTED WITH "HIGH AUTHORITY", WHO WAS UNDERSTOOD TO BE ENGAGED IN CONSULTATION ON OTHER CEASEFIRE PROBLEMS.

5. MEANWHILE GVN DEL MADE DIRECT CONTACT WITH DRV DEL AND REPORTED TO EMBOFF POSSIBILITY OF COMPROMISE. USDEL ALSO DEVELOPED ALTERNATE PROCEDURES. FPJMT MET AT NOON AND US/DRV/PRG AGREED ON SPECIFIC COMPROMISE; GVN DEL RESERVED POSITION PENDING INSTRUCTIONS. EMBASSY WAS ADVISED AS OF 1610 LOCAL THAT GVN DEL HAD RECEIVED INSTRUCTIONS TO ACCEPT COMPROMISE WHEREBY US EOD SPECIALISTS WOULD INSPECT AND TAKE POSSESSION OF INCENDIARY DEVICE UNDER FPJMT OBSERVATION, WHICH WOULD BE FOLLOWED BY RELEASE OF CARGO AND AIRCRAFT. GVN PROPOSED IMMEDIATE INSPECTION AT 1630.

6. AT COB JUNE 9 USDEL REPORTS TO EMBASSY IMPASSE CONTINUES. PRG DEL, AS HOST, HAS INSISTED ON FURTHER FPJMT MEETING AT 1900 TO DISCUSS MODALITIES.

7. DETAILED REPORTS FOLLOW FROM USDEL FPJMT.
WHITEHOUSE

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